EXHIBIT 7
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Excerpt from Montana Grizzly Bear Management Plan for Western Montana.

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Livestock Conflicts

Livestock operations that maintain large blocks of open rangeland can provide many benefits to the longterm

conservation of grizzly bears, not the least of which is the maintenance of open space and habitats that support a wide variety of wildlife, including grizzlies. At the same time, livestock operators can suffer losses from bear depredation. These losses tend to be directed at sheep and young cattle. In addition, honeybees are classified as livestock in Montana, and bears can damage apiaries. Our ability to deal with such issues will, in large part, determine the overall success of our grizzly management efforts. Correspondingly, FWP's preferred approaches to managing livestock conflict in western Montana include:

- Management efforts will be directed at depredating animals.
- Wildlife Services (WS) will be the lead agency dealing with livestock depredation (see MOU Appendices D and E) and as recovery and eventual delisting occurs, we will seek to provide them with additional flexibility and ability to make day-to-day management decisions regarding resolving livestock conflicts.
- FWP will respond to conflicts in cooperation with WS. Ultimately, with successful recovery and delisting, WS will be the appropriate agency to handle livestock conflicts and will report their activities annually, as already occurs with black bears and other predators.
- FWP, in cooperation with WS and other agencies, will focus on preventive programs aimed at minimizing livestock conflict with priority toward those areas with a history of conflict or currently occupied by bears.
- FWP will review and adjust the guidelines for dealing with damage to beehives (Appendix E).
- FWP will work with beekeepers to provide electric fences for all apiaries accessible to bears, and FWP

will re-evaluate the guidelines for bear depredation to beehives and modify if needed.

- FWP will encourage private programs and funding for compensation of livestock loss.
- FWP will review the carcass redistribution program and make changes if indicated by that review.
- FWP will work with the livestock industry to evaluate the possibility of an insurance program for predator losses.

- Currently sheep and/or goats are being used for weed control. FWP will work with operators to ensure conflicts with bears are minimal through the use of herders, electric fences, dogs, or other tools as appropriate. There may be places where these programs may be inappropriate due to conflicts with bears, and FWP will recommend the use of "non-livestock" approaches to weed control in those areas.

Although livestock and bears share many landscapes in Montana, conflicts with livestock result in few bear mortalities. Currently, WS handles issues of livestock depredation, and FWP anticipates this will continue. FWP envisions the establishment of proactive collaborative working agreements with WS that focus future programs and efforts on conflict prevention where possible.

The agency envisions programs where landowners can contact FWP's grizzly bear management specialists for assistance with assessments of risks from bears and possible preventative approaches to minimize those risks. FWP will work to provide landowners, livestock growers and beekeepers with the appropriate tools (e.g. electric fencing, aversive conditioning, guard dogs) to minimize conflicts. In addition, FWP will work with federal and tribal authorities, NGOs and beekeepers to identify sources of funding to develop programs that provide private livestock operations with additional benefits (such as priority for easements or access to other FWP programs) if they implement preventive approaches and maintain opportunities for wildlife, including bears, on their private lands and their public-land allotments. Working with other agencies and interests, the possibility of transferring grazing leases from areas of high conflicts to other areas with willing landowners/operators is another option. In this way,

the program and its benefits are focused on operators who make an effort to address concerns and issues

that result from the presence of grizzlies.

As a long-term goal FWP will also seek to enclose all bee yards in areas accessible to bears with electric fencing. Electric fencing is very effective at deterring both black and grizzly bears, and use of this technique can significantly reduce problems and the need to remove bears. FWP will work with the livestock industry to identify sources of funding to accomplish this. The Natural Resources Conservation Service recently implemented a new grant program to fund electric fencing in the Blackfoot Valley. They also established a standardized all-species electric fence design for fencing projects. Additional efforts will be made to identify possible funding that could be used to support staff whose sole responsibility would be to develop/implement preventative programs. These personnel should also be available to any livestock operation when requested to assess potential depredation risks and identify possible solutions prior to any depredations.

Devices to protect apiaries, corralled livestock, chicken and turkey coops, and stored feeds may be provided by FWP to property owners for protection of agricultural products. Protective supplies include electric fencing, bear resistant containers, audible and visual deterrent devices, and aversive conditioning

devices. FWP may form partnerships with WS, livestock operators, NGOs and land management agencies to promote livestock management techniques that reduce bear depredations. For example, some

people request that dead livestock be removed from grizzly bear areas and there are programs available to do this in parts of western Montana. While there may be times this is appropriate, there are cases within the State where livestock that died due to poisonous plants, lightening, or other causes can provide food for bears in areas away from potential conflict sites. Recognizing this, FWP has a program to redistribute livestock carcasses on the Rocky Mountain Front and the Blackfoot Valley so they remain available to bears but in areas that minimize the potential for conflict. Assisting livestock operators, and removing carcasses from areas around buildings or calving/lambing areas can minimize potential

conflicts with bears. These types of programs will be evaluated for use within the other portions of

western Montana and to ensure they are functioning as desired. Conflict management will emphasize long-term, non-lethal solutions, but relocating or removing offending animals will be necessary to resolve some problems. FWP will continue to promote the development of new techniques and devices that can be used to protect agricultural products from bear damage.

At the present time, private conservation groups in Montana assist in developing preventative approaches, and FWP will cooperate with them to address this issue. Defenders of Wildlife has already cost shared the purchase of electric fence to protect sheep and bee yards through their Proactive Carnivore Conservation Fund. The National Wildlife Federation has a program to retire public land grazing allotments in areas with high conflict between livestock and wildlife from willing sellers; to date over 300,000 acres in the Yellowstone area have been retired by the Federation and other cooperators. Such cost share or cooperative programs will be a component of any long-term solutions to these issues.

In any discussion of livestock damage, an issue that is frequently raised concerns offering compensation to livestock operators for their losses to bears. While FWP encourages private groups (notably Defenders of Wildlife through the Bailey Wildlife Foundation Proactive Carnivore Conservation Fund) to continue compensating operators, the agency prefers to take the approach of providing management flexibility to landowners as a long-term solution to preventing livestock conflicts and depredation. Providing operators the opportunity to develop proactive problem solving plans to respond to potential conflicts before they develop can build support for the long-term program of increasing bear numbers and distribution. Moreover, compensation relies on verification that may not be easily accomplished in Montana's multi-predator environment. It also requires assessment of value, which can vary greatly between individual animals (for example, not every cow has the same value), and it requires ongoing funding sources. Fundamentally, however, it deals with a problem after it has occurred.

If Montana can implement a program that affords landowners management flexibility within reason to prevent livestock-grizzly conflicts and with some constraints (similar to black bears and mountain lions), FWP believes it will build broader public support. Groups interested in conservation of the bear will, however, need assurances that such flexibility will not jeopardize long-term survival or ongoing recovery prospects.

Property Damage

Bears can, and will on occasion, damage personal property other than livestock. For example, they may enter buildings, chew on snowmobile seats or tear down fruit trees. In fact, bears are highly attracted to almost any potential food source. Processed human food, gardens, garbage, livestock and pet feeds, livestock carcasses, and septic treatment systems are particularly attractive to bears near camps and residential areas, and are often the cause of human-bear conflicts. FWP's objective is to minimize, to the extent possible, property damage caused by grizzly bears.

- FWP will focus on preventive measures, including management aimed at elimination of attractants, and better sanitation measures; the agency's bear management specialists will work on these issues on both public and private lands.
- FWP will seek funding to continue the grizzly bear management specialist positions currently stationed in Missoula, Kalispell, and Choteau. The IGBC has also recognized the need to create additional positions in the Cabinet-Yaak and

Wildlife Services

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State Report

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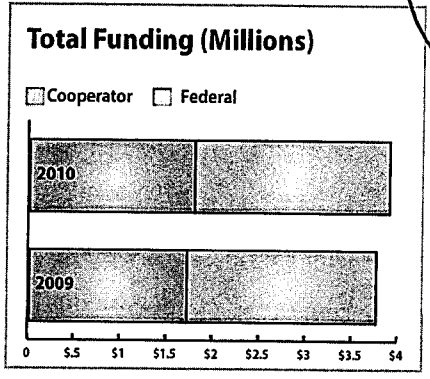
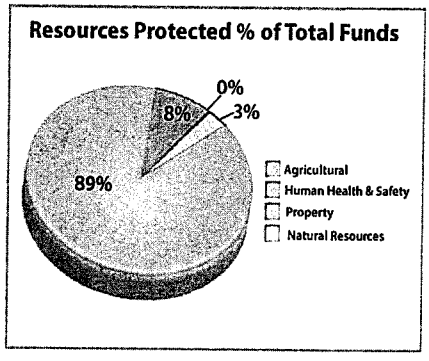
Major Cooperators

- State agricultural associations
- Montana Department of Livestock
- Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- County governments





USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Montana

Every day, Montana's residents, industries, organizations, and agencies call on Wildlife Services (WS) for expertise in protecting agriculture, property, natural resources, and human health and safety from damage or threats posed by wildlife. Managed by professional wildlife biologists, WS responds with effective, selective, and humane strategies to resolve wildlife conflicts.

Although Montana has one of the lowest populations of any state in the Nation at less than one million people, only one other state surpasses it in farm and ranch land at almost 60 million acres. Agriculture, particularly cattle and sheep production, is vital to the State's economy; the WS program in Montana focuses most of its efforts on managing the interface between livestock and wildlife.

Applying Science & Expertise to Wildlife Challenges

WS offers information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable many people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. Often, this technical assistance can be provided over the phone. WS also provides on-site expertise, or direct assistance, to manage complex wildlife problems that cannot be safely resolved by others. To support this effort, WS conducts scientific research across the nation to develop answers to new problems posed by wildlife and to ensure the program benefits from the latest science and technology. While WS conducts a wide range of operational and research activities, a few in-depth examples are provided to highlight the variety of work WS is doing in Montana.

Protecting Livestock from Predators—In 2010, predators caused an estimated $1.7 million in losses to Montana's sheep industry (up 28 percent from 2009). Cattle losses to predators, although not reported annually, have increased significantly over the last six years as well. Because predators have a significant impact on the livestock industry, all Montana livestock producers contribute funding to support WS' livestock protection efforts through a state per capita tax.

WS is recognized by the Montana livestock industry and State agencies as the lead in managing predator damage to livestock and other personal property. These predators include red foxes, coyotes, mountain lions, black bears, grizzly bears, and gray wolves. The Montana Department of Livestock has given WS full authority to administer the Department's aerial operations as a tool to protect livestock from predators such as coyotes and red foxes. In addition, the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department authorized WS to conduct wildlife damage management activities to protect agricultural resources in the state from big game species such as black bears and mountain lions. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department authorized WS to conduct grizzly bear and gray wolf damage management in accordance with the Endangered Species Act and management plans that have been accepted for the State of Montana.

In addition to the direct assistance that WS employees provide to Montana farmers and ranchers, WS National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) conducts an extensive program of research and methods development to reduce and prevent predation by wildlife on sheep and cattle. Studies are underway to develop more effective, less injurious coyote capture systems, sound-activated conditioning collars for wolves, improved electronic frightening devices, and new exclusionary methods such as turbo fladry. Also, coyote territorial behavior and population modeling studies are underway to help develop reproduction suppression strategies for high predation-rate areas.

Protecting Air Travelers—The WS program is recognized by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for its expertise in reducing wildlife hazards to the aviation industry.

WS has provided both technical and direct assistance to airports throughout Montana to identify and reduce potential safety hazards to the flying public and to the airlines. Whenever an airport perceives a wildlife problem they call WS to assess the problem and give recommendations on what can be done to reduce the threats caused by wildlife at any particular airport. WS also provides assistance to airports considering new runways or other expansion plans to see how those changes might be affected by wildlife in the area.

NWRC also conducts research from its Sandusky, OH, Field Station to reduce wildlife hazards to aircraft and reduce risks to the public. Studies are underway at several large airports where scientists evaluate habitat management practices and wildlife dispersal techniques. NWRC also maintains the National Wildlife Strike Database used by the FAA and airports to monitor trends and wildlife species of greatest concern to aviation. Any and all research findings that prove to be applicable in reducing risks at Montana's airports will be considered as additional tools to prevent wildlife collisions with aircraft.

Looking to the Future

With the successful reintroduction and recovery of gray wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains, Montana WS anticipates the growing demand for its expertise in handling livestock predation issues caused by wolves. The livestock industry and State agencies are expecting WS to provide this service. WS, however, may be somewhat limited in its resources to manage this damage. The presence of threatened and endangered species in an area places greater restrictions on the types of methods that can be used to manage predation by bears, coyotes, lions, and other wildlife. Many of the less expensive and most effective methods used to manage livestock predation are not permitted. This situation will create significant challenges for both livestock producers and WS managers in the future.

In addition to the recovered wolf population, two grizzly bear populations in Montana have recovered or are nearing recovery goals (Greater Yellowstone Area population and the Northern Continental Divide population). As grizzly bear numbers increase annually, WS will receive additional requests for assistance from livestock producers in dealing with grizzly predation on livestock. The recovering and recovered grizzly bear populations and associated increase in the WS workload to deal with grizzly/ livestock conflicts will pose additional challenges to WS managers in Montana in the near future.

Montana Wildlife Services Funding

In addition to receiving federally allocated funds, Montana WS also receives money from cooperators such as livestock producers, private individuals, businesses, and other Federal, State, and local government agencies. All Montana livestock producers contribute funding to support WS' livestock protection efforts through a state per capita tax. In addition, sheep producers in 47 counties and cattle producers in 16 counties provide additional funds for livestock protection through county livestock taxes. In many cases, these cooperators need help in resolving wildlife damage problems.

Top 5 Major Assistance Activities in 2010:

- Protecting sheep, cattle, goats, and other livestock from predation
- Protecting agricultural crops from damage caused by birds and small mammals
- Protecting Federal threatened and endangered species and other wildlife resources
- Protecting aircraft and airline passengers from wildlife strikes at airports
- Monitoring of wildlife-borne diseases including plague, tularemia, avian influenza, rabies, etc.

Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to Montana in 2010:

- Investigating coyote reproduction control
- Examining predator ecology
- Focusing on adult territorial coyotes to manage sheep depredation
- Developing improved exclusion methods, including turbo fladry, to exclude predators from livestock pastures
- Improving assessment sampling and economic methods for wildlife damage management